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Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

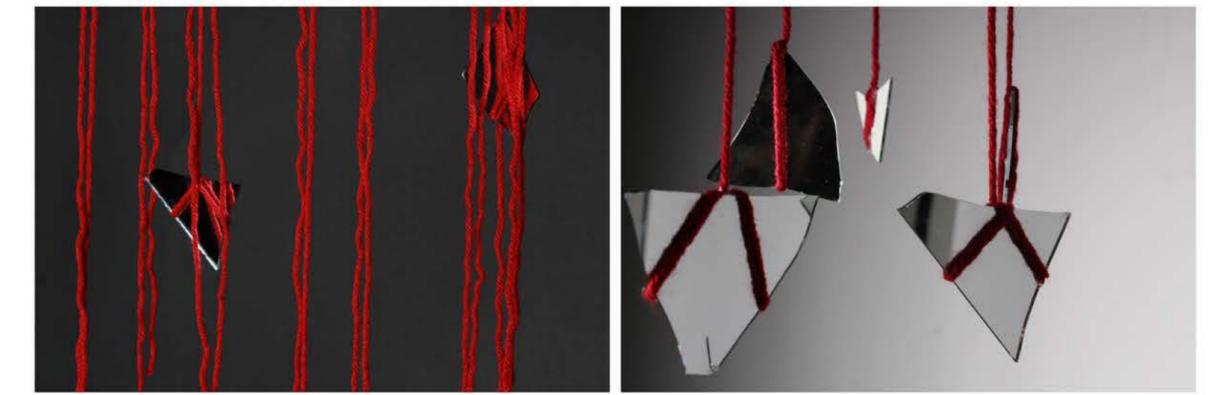
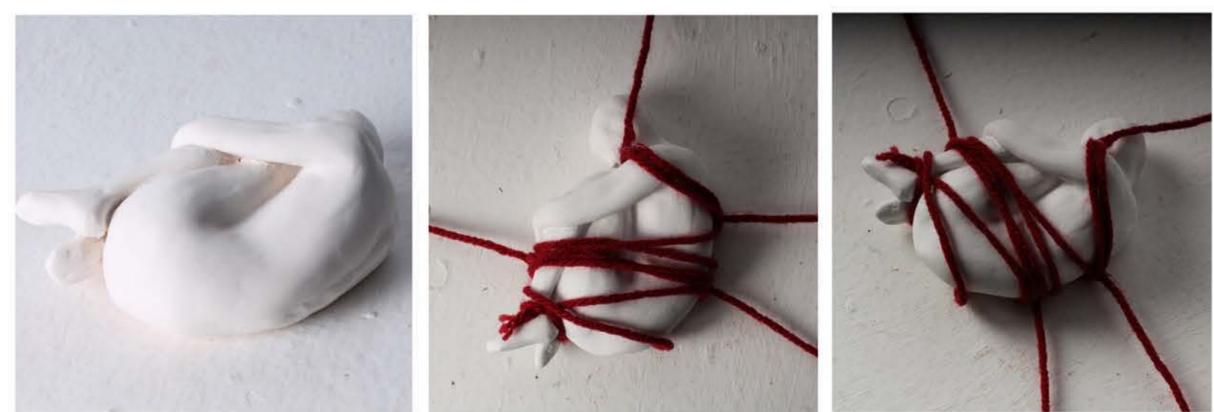
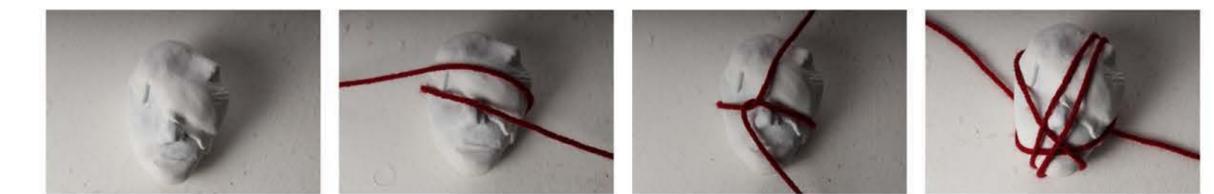
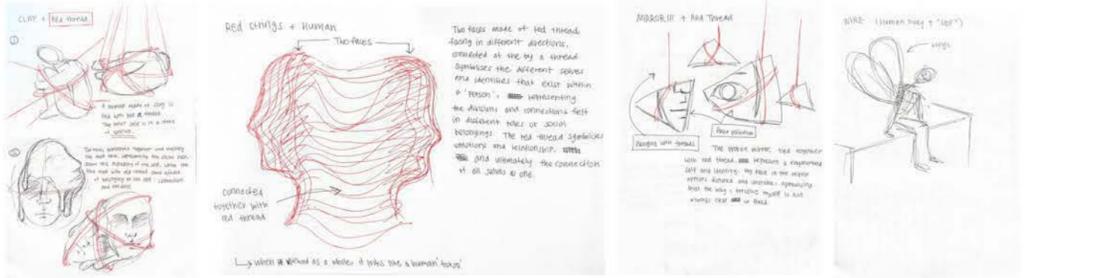
Level 3 Visual Arts 2025

91459 Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within sculpture practice

EXEMPLAR

Achievement

TOTAL A



Achievement

Subject: Visual Arts – Sculpture

Standard: 91459

Marker commentary

This portfolio demonstrates a small-scale and deliberately contained sculptural practice that investigates the subject of interpersonal connection through the motif of the red thread of fate. This legend, originating in Chinese mythology and associated with a marriage deity, proposes that an invisible red thread is tied around the ankles or fingers of individuals destined to meet. The central belief that the cord may stretch or tangle but never break establishes a clear conceptual framework. This is further supported through the use of Chinese cultural symbolism of red as a colour representing happiness, luck, and good fortune, commonly associated with wedding traditions.

The use of clay establishes a connection to creation myths in which human forms are shaped from the earth. The winged seated figure on Panel 1 introduces the notion of a deity of connection, depicted in a moment of rest before undertaking the act of tying connections between people. The clay figure positioned in a foetal-like pose, with arms wrapped protectively around its knees, communicates resistance to being bound. Subsequent works on the panel demonstrate incremental experimentation and increasing complexity with wrapping the figure in red thread, progressing from restrained binding to full suspension in space where the form is held within the tension created by the thread.

Panel 2 shows an investigation into face forms that draws upon artist models such as Yuk King Tan. Two opposing face forms are mounted on the wall and linked by multiple red thread connections, producing a conjoined spatial relationship. The sway of the thread dictates the form, and although the faces turn away from each other, the shared connections suggest an unaware bond. Later works shift towards a more chaotic and amorphous threading of forms, where the figure becomes difficult to detect. The introduction of mirror fragments positions the viewer within the work, implying their participation and connection with an invisible red thread. Experiments with black thread in combination with red introduce a suggestion of emotional darkness or strain creeping into the relationship. The final phase presents an interactive installation or performance where the performer negotiates the tension of the thread, at times pulling against it as if attempting to escape both the connection and their own reflected image.

For this candidate to have been awarded Achievement with Merit, their sculptural investigation would have needed to more effectively align the development of sculptural form with the conceptual premise of connection between individuals. More dynamic installation-based exploration, particularly work that moved across spaces and incorporated fine red thread in relation to individuals, would have refined the narrative and strengthened communication within the portfolio.